THE EFFECT OF MEDIA EXPOSURE ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

Safitri D[1]*, Arina RN[1], Yuli A[2] and Candra C[2]

[1]*Department Communication Science, Faculty of Sosial Science, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia*

[2]*Department Civic Education, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia*

Abstract: Advances in technology combined with the emergence of the proliferation of social media have facilitated public access to all information to find out. Students are active users of technology and social media. As active users, many students are exposed to social media which can cause worry and fear if they experience similar incidents in the future, causing stress and mental health problems. This study aims to find out how social media is exposed to students' mental health. The theory used in this study is social media literacy and media analysis models. With social media literacy skills, students not only know how to retrieve and process information appropriately in various social settings but can maintain mental health in dealing with excess and uncertainty of information. The research methodology used is quantitative with experimental methods on two groups of students who experience mental health disorders. The results showed that media exposure had a significant effect on students' mental health. Students admit that they are easily influenced by social media. This is shown by the ease with which their moods change after reading information from social media. Students are also addicted to social media, so they lack sleep. Another effect is that they easily doubt, lack confidence, and feel imperfect after reading posts on social media.

Keywords: Media Exposure, Mental Health, social media

Introduction

Interacting with social media has become part of the student's routine activities. They use it to communicate, organize, get along with peers and others. In associating with the theme of peers, social media offers to associate with many people, starting from friends who are familiar in everyday life and friends who are only known in cyberspace. But this friendship is not always good. Many of these friendships cause students to experience mental health problems.

Previous research conducted by Pantic (2014); social media has the potential to cause mental health in students. Likewise, research from Deepa and Priya (2020), social media has an impact on students' mental health problems, especially depression and anxiety. Researchers have also conducted research on final year students who experienced depression while working on their thesis during the Covid-19 pandemic (Safitri et al. 2021).

Social media to share information, thoughts, and ideas, has an important role in human daily life. Communication through social media can also be useful for educational activities. However, many scientific findings state that information produced and published on social media can also have a

*Corresponding Authors' Email: *dinisafitri@unj.ac.id*

negative impact on human health. Some of these impacts even pose a significant hazard to public health (Venegas-Vera et al, 2020).

Based on previous research, conducted by Jabbour et al (2023), social media has an important role in shaping decisions and changing perspectives. The results of research found that the high frequency of psychological well-being correlated with the high frequency of exposure to social media. Those who were more aware of misinformation had lower levels of hopelessness and anxiety. This research recommends the need to use social media properly in health-related topics and encourages the government to create a platform that informs about false and invalid posts.

Rates of depressive and anxiety symptoms were much higher than those reported among university students. Activities with social media become a routine for students. In fact, based on a recent survey, 22% of students in one day there are more than 10 times every day entering their account. But these activities have an impact on mental health student.

The source of the problem from exposure to social media is the cyberbullying and trolling activities carried out in it. This is very dangerous for the mental health of students. Based on research from Barrense-Dias. et al (2019), individuals who use social media for too long can experience mental health problems. This is also supported by the research of Oberst et al (2017) who found that excessive use of social media can cause emotional problems.

Cases of bullying on social media are extraordinary and dangerous for the mental health of students. On social media, students often engage in digital harassment, ridicule other people, mimicry, which causes other people to lose self-confidence, anxiety, and other mental health problems.

Pater & Mynatt (2017) researched that social media can lead to hostile behavior if used for too long. social media can hurt its users. Parmar (2017) revealed that college students spend their energy on social media in normal times, 12-15 hours per day. They can use WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media.

Research Patel, et al. (2016.) showed social media can create mental health problems such as anxiety, sadness, pain, depression, and disappointment with life. Social media also keeps students from socializing with other students face to face, this can indicate stress, sadness, and self-deduction (GermannMolz and Paris, 2015).

Clarke et.al (2015) researched that students who are increasingly exposed to social media have difficulty socializing and their health also decreases due to fatigue. Amedie's research (2015) states that social media is becoming sources of anxiety, depression, and sadness that impact on the mental health of students.

Research by Keles et al (2020), although social media cannot be separated from routine student activities, it is blamed for increasing mental health problems. Keles et al synthesized evidence on the influence of social media on depression, anxiety, and psychological distress in college students. Primary data were obtained from PsycINFO, Medline, Embase, CINAHL and SSCI database searches

using a cross-sectional method. There are four social media exposure variables used, namely time spent, activity, investment, and addiction. All of these variables correlate with the variables of mental health problems, namely depression, anxiety, and psychological stress. However, in this study there were limitations to the cross-sectional method in terms of sampling and measurement. Further research can be explored through qualitative research and longitudinal cohort studies. The purpose of this study is to describe the effect of media exposure on mental health students.

Materials and Methods

This research methodology is quantitative with descriptive research type. Data collection techniques using surveys. Primary data was obtained from questionnaires distributed online and secondary data was obtained from literature studies taken from journals, websites, and other online platforms. The sample in this study were 37 undergraduate students of communication science at the State University of Jakarta who had been selected based on the research objectives. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, where selected respondents were heavy users of social media, who use social media more than 8 hours per day. There are two variables measured in this study.

The first variable is Media Exposure (ME) which acts as independent variable, we used four indicators to reflect the construct of variable ME. The first indicator questioned whether the respondents are addicted to social media (X1: I'm addicted to social media). Second indicator questioned whether respondents felt anxious because social media postings (X2: I feel anxious because social media postings). Third indicator questioned respondents whether they are frequently show their feelings through social media (X3: I often show my emotion through social media). Fourth indicator questioned whether respondents can control themselves when interacting with social media (X4: I often cannot control myself when interacting with social media). All four questions were of the type of ordinal data ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

The second variable is Student Mental Health (SMH) which became dependent variable. We used six indicators to reflect the construct of variable SMH. First indicator asked respondents whether social media made them feel flawed (Y1: Is social media make me feel flawed). Second indicator questioned whether the respondents became less active because their interaction with social media (Y2: I became less active because my interaction with social media). Third indicator questioned respondents whether they feel uncomfortable because they were different from their social media friends (Y3: I feel uncomfortable because I feel I'm different from my social media friends). Fourth indicator questioned whether respondents became less confident after reading social media posts (Y4: I feel less confident after reading social media posts). Fifth indicator questioned whether respondents felt afraid to think about themselves as a result of their interaction with social media (Y5: I feel afraid to think about myself as a result of my interaction with social media). Sixth indicator questioned respondents whether they became duller after reading social media post about mental illness (Y6: I become duller after reading social media posts about mental illness). All six questions were of the type of ordinal data ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). This study used PLS-SEM algorithm to process the data.

Results and Discussion

The reliability and validity of the constructs of this study were measured through the value of Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Table 1 shows the result of the construct reliability and validity:

Table 1. Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ME	0.709	0.714	0.819	0.531
SMH	0.827	0.857	0.871	0.532

All measurement returning value above the minimum threshold, showing that the construct used in this study were reliable and valid.

After measuring construct reliability and validity, the next step is to assess discriminant validity, which measures the extent of a construct empirically distinct from other constructs (Hair *et al*, 2018). Discriminant validity can be obtained by using two measurement, Fornell-Larcker Criterion and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Table 2 and Table 3 shows the value for both measurements.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Value

	ME	SMH
ME	0.729	
SMH	0.721	0.729

Table 3. HTMT Value

	ME	SMH
ME		
SMH	0.859	

Both measurement returning results that is below the threshold (0.9), therefore we can conclude that there is no similarity between the constructs used in this study.

After assessing the measurement model, the next step is to evaluate the PLS-SEM result. The first step is to check whether collinearity exists by evaluating the VIF value. Table 4 shows VIF value for each indicator.

Table 4. Indicators

	VIF
I often show my emotion through social media	1.255
I became less active because my interaction with social media	1.817
I become duller after reading social media posts about mental illness	2.338
I feel afraid to think about myself as a result of my interaction with social media	1.836
I feel anxious because social media postings	1.313
I feel less confident after reading social media posts	1.841
I feel uncomfortable because I feel I'm different from my social media friends	1.784
I often cannot control myself when interacting with social media	1.567
I'm addicted to social media	1.360
Is social media make me feel flawed	2.101

The table shows no indicators have a value >= 5, it means that there is no collinearity between indicators used in this model.

The next step is to check the model explanatory power through R-square value. Table 5 shows R-square value of the model (non-adjusted and adjusted)

Table 5. R-square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
SMH	0.519	0.506

The value shows that this model has moderate explanatory power, that is around half of the variances in the sample can be explained by the model.

The final step is to check the correlation between constructs used in this study. Table 6 shows the path coefficient between variables and table 7 shows the loadings of each indicator as a measure of relevance of indicators.

Table 6. Path Coefficient

	ME	SMH
ME		0.721
SMH		

Table. 7 Relevance Indicatiors

	ME	SMH
I often show my emotion through social media	0.731	
I became less active because my interaction with social media		0.610
I become duller after reading social media posts about mental illness		0.693
I feel afraid to think about myself as a result of my interaction with social media		0.720
I feel anxious because social media postings	0.755	
I feel less confident after reading social media posts		0.813
I feel uncomfortable because I feel I'm different from my social media friends		0.721
I often cannot control myself when interacting with social media	0.754	
I'm addicted to social media	0.673	
Is social media make me feel flawed		0.800

The path coefficient value shows that ME variable and SMH variable are strongly correlated. Loadings value from each indicator shows that all indicators used in this model are relevant to the construct, albeit some only moderately relevant. The following is the resulting model:
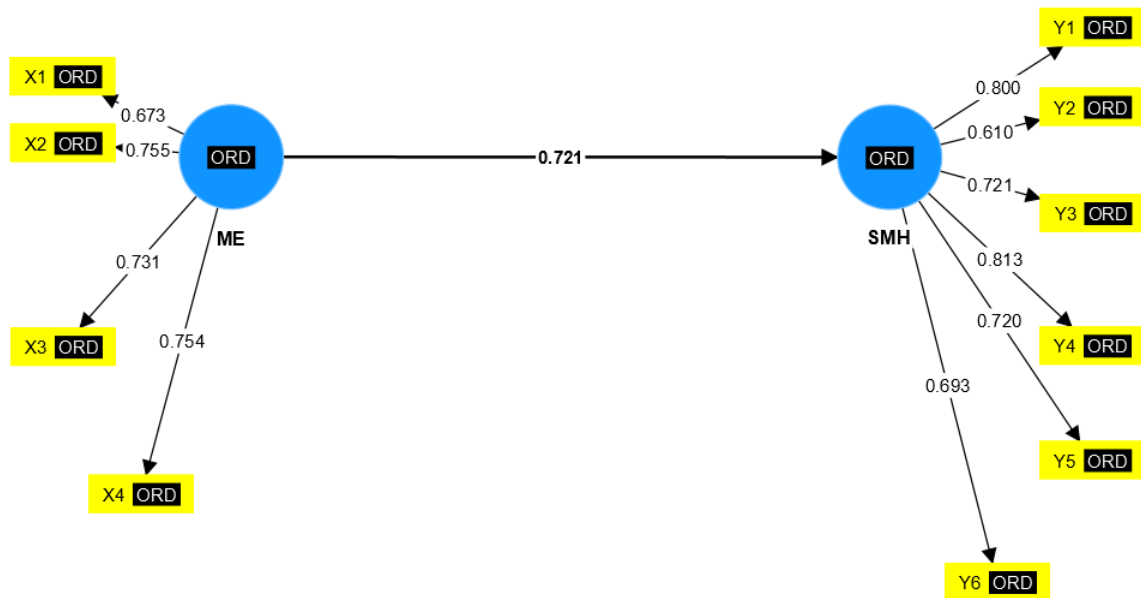
Figure1. Model of the Effect of Media Exposure on Student Mental Health

Based on the model above, it can be concluded that there is a strong influence of media exposure on student mental health. This needs to get attention from all parties, especially professional educators.

Based on research from Reis et al (2023), students are vulnerable to mental health problems. They are also more likely to delay or fail to seek help. For this reason, professional educators can include mental health learning in curriculum design. With the existence of a mental health curriculum, it can instill mental health material as an inculcation of mental health literacy learning through project-based learning.

Mental health is important in adolescent well-being. Therefore, the mental health literacy curriculum (MHL) must become an integral part of professional education that will shape students' professional identities (Ranahan & Alsaieq).

Conclusion

This study shows that social media exposure has a strong correlation with student mental health, with phenomena of feeling less confident and feeling flawed are the most relevant indicators among observed samples.

Declaration of Interest Statement
The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

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